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# SERVICE

## USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE •

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### WIC ON THE MOVE

Following The Families Who Follow The Harvest. Americans are well-known for their transient and traveling ways. Probable record holders for getting up and moving on are migrant farm workers. Each year, as harvest time moves from south to north in the U.S., thousands of migrant workers follow along, cutting the wheat, picking the apples, pulling the beans, getting the food out of the fields and orchards and ready to go to market. There are three major "streams" of these migrant workers, the largest of which is the mid-continent stream running from Texas in a generally north and east direction up through the center of the country. Recently, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service announced plans to go along with the migrant families on their mid-continent march. The aim is to bring more families into the Department's special food program for women, infants and children (WIC). Twelve states lying in the mid-continent stream will share some \$2.5 million for a pilot project to open new WIC clinics in areas with a large influx of migrant workers, to track migrants as they move from state to state, and to try to solve one of the most difficult problems for migrants: how to continue getting WIC benefits as they move from place to place. When women first apply for WIC, they will be given a card with their name, an identification number, and information verifying eligibility. The card will allow migrants to apply for WIC at a new clinic without having to be recertified. At each local clinic the card will be updated with information on participation, including a record of completion of modular lessons on nutrition. FNS has designed the new modular nutrition education curriculum in Spanish and English especially for the migrant project. While this army of migrant workers may not travel on its stomach, USDA does have the well being of its stomach in mind.

### BONING UP ON CALCIUM

We Have It And We Need It. Calcium is the most abundant mineral in the body. However, except for iron, it is the mineral most likely to be found short in some diets. For instance, women and girls from the age of 9 on up may lack as much as 25 to 30 percent of the calcium they need. Milk and dairy products are the basic sources of calcium, but not the only sources. Dark-green, leafy vegetables (like collards, mustard greens or turnip greens) and salmon and sardines (because of all the tiny bones you eat in them) provide some calcium.



Benefactor And Adversary. Humans live in the midst of nature. Nature lives in the midst of humanity. Sometimes it's in spite of each other. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has an interest in the survival of both, as illustrated in numerous USDA publications that deal with the large and small relationships between humans and nature. Take, for instance:

Controlling Wasps (G-122). This booklet describes wasps, including hornets, yellow jackets, Polistes, mud daubers, and cicada killers, as "a group of beneficial insects that attack and destroy harmful insects found around homes and gardens." It also points out that wasps will attack people, not because of any visual problems or lack of discrimination, but in self-defense. The publication describes the various types of wasps and their nests and gives advice on what to do if wasps take up residence too near yours. It also tells you how to treat a sting from a defensive wasp.

How Trees Help Clean The Air (AIB-412). Pollution can provide nutrition for trees and other plants. In limited amounts, of course. Otherwise, with 300 million tons of pollution that is added to the atmosphere each year, plants might have a weight problem. But plants, bless their systems, do clear much of the pollution from the air to the benefit of humans who breathe. Trees, because of their dominance in size and numbers, carry on the largest part of this activity. They absorb some pollutants, use some of them for food, and then release other elements that are not harmful to the atmosphere. Besides eating pollution, trees possess other abilities to help clear, clean, filter and freshen the air. How they do it--and, for the most part, survival is explained in this new publication based on research by USDA scientists. Trees, of course, cannot do the job by themselves, and the booklet suggests some ways that humans can help.

Insects And Related Pests of House Plants (G-67). House plants, like any living thing, need food, water...and protection. For, like all living things, house plants can be attacked by pests. There are mites, gnats, mealybugs, scales, and other pests that can harm the foliage, roots, and general health of house plants. One pest, an unhealthy-sounding thing called a psocid, apparently does not damage plants, but sometimes gather in soft-bodied clusters of hundreds to become (ugh) nuisances. This booklet describes several of the little--sometimes almost invisible--beasts attracted to house plants, the telltale signs of their unwanted presence, and the measures needed to control them.

Single free copies of the above publications may be requested from the Publication Division, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, Special Reports Division, Rm. 459-A, Washington, DC 20250, or Tel. 202-447-5437.

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